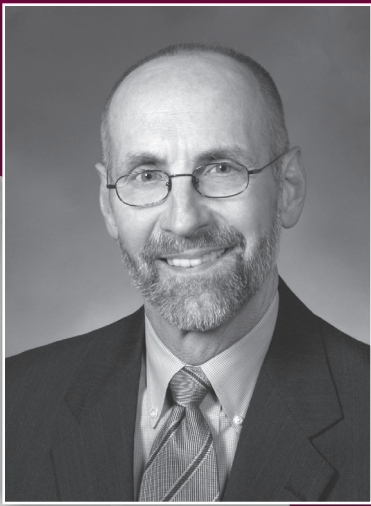


Rep. Larry Springer



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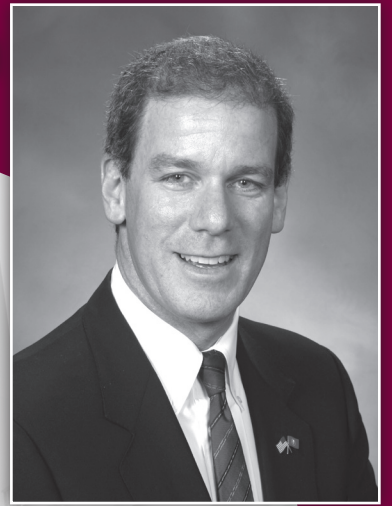
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Report from the 45th District

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Session Wrap Newsletter 2010

**45th District
Rep. Larry
Springer
Rep. Roger
Goodman**



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

First of all, thank you for the opportunity to represent you and the 45th District in Olympia. Your continued support and feedback helps us address issues that are most important to you.

The Legislature has adjourned for the year, and our state's budget is balanced. Our state's economy has not completely recovered from the global economic downturn. However, as we continue to travel the road to recovery the steps we take today are geared toward providing long-term solutions that will keep our state fiscally responsible while protecting critical services for Washingtonians. In response to the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, we created a balanced approach that relies on deep cuts, more efficiency, prioritized spending, and a modest revenue increase.

In this newsletter, you'll find an update on the budget crisis, as well as steps taken this session to promote job creation, provide a world-class education for our children, reform our criminal justice system, strengthen public safety and more. You probably noticed that we have sent you several joint newsletters within the last couple of years, and this is occurring even more often. This year, you might have received one of our newsletters via email instead of a hard copy. These are ways we are working together to cut costs for the state.

As we continue to represent the 45th District, we will consider your views in every decision we make in Olympia. As always, please continue to keep in touch throughout the year. We know that the best ideas don't always come from Olympia; they come from you.

Larry and Roger

Rep. Larry Springer



Budget Crisis

Last year, we balanced a \$9 billion shortfall, without any new taxes. Thirty-three states chose to raise taxes to help meet this economic crisis – we did not. Instead, we made cuts and implemented reforms and efficiencies. Since then, consumer confidence remained at an all-time low and state revenues plummeted another \$1.7 billion. The demand for state services and other mandatory costs also increased, creating an additional \$1 billion shortfall. Our \$2.8 billion deficit this year presented my colleagues and me with multiple challenges, requiring even more cuts to much-needed government services. Overall, the two-year budget problem amounted to nearly \$12 billion, the worst budget deficit in our state’s history.

As a member of the House Finance Committee, a primary focus of mine this session was on addressing the revenue shortfall while remaining fiscally responsible and protecting critical state services. These include, but aren’t limited to, supporting strong public schools,

encouraging college and job training opportunities, providing health care for children, and maintaining services for our seniors and disabled citizens. I know that raising taxes should never be our first response to a budget problem, and it wasn’t. Ultimately, the 2009-2011 operating budget relies on about \$1.00 in new revenue for every \$4.40 in real spending cuts. Last year, we filled the biggest budget gap in history without raising a single new tax, and we continued to cut spending again this year. We also implemented long-term reforms that will cut the cost of government and streamline the way we do business. In addition, we took major steps toward a smart recovery by approving legislation to create jobs in every corner of the state and improve access to a high-quality education.

For additional information on the recently passed operating, capital and transportation budgets, please visit <http://leap.leg.wa.gov>. And, as always, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Creating new jobs

As a small business owner, I believe we must continue to improve our business climate and make smart investments that will lead to more jobs, now and down the road. One of the best ways to rebuild our economy is by putting people back to work, and new job-creating measures that were approved this session will do just that. We took steps to create at least 30,000 jobs in every corner of the state by retrofitting education facilities. These are family wage jobs that put people back to work by improving the energy-efficiency of schools and other public buildings, saving taxpayers approximately \$130 million a year in energy costs. In November, Washingtonians will vote on whether to approve a measure that carries about \$500 million in bond sales, with money dedicated to these energy-efficiency upgrades at public universities and K-12 schools. We also implemented a tax exemption to incentivize high-tech companies to build the next generation of data centers here in Washington. As a result, more than 3,000 new jobs will be added in areas hit hard by the economic downturn. I’m also pleased to report that legislation I co-sponsored this session will help provide much-needed affordable housing for working families across Washington and in the 45th District. With the Washington Works Housing Act of 2010, more moderate-income people who make up our workforce can live near where they work. This legislation creates 8,000 jobs while investing in an innovative program to build workforce housing.

Providing a world class education



In order to prepare our children to compete in the global race for the best jobs of tomorrow, we must provide them with a remarkable education today. Last year, I supported legislation that outlined comprehensive education reform; this was the first major look at how to better fund schools in 30 years. Despite the difficult economic climate, I am pleased to say that we are moving forward with key reforms that bring our state closer to its obligation to fully fund basic education. This year, we passed legislation to update K-12 funding formulas

while simplifying the current complicated budgeting process and increasing fiscal transparency. We also committed to reducing kindergarten through 3rd grade class sizes every year to reach a goal of 17 students per class by the 2017-18 school year and to reforming the way we pay for student transportation to and from school. These improvements will help provide our children with the education they need to be the leaders of tomorrow.

Coffee Hours

As we look forward to next year’s legislative session, I’d like to invite you to join me at one of my upcoming coffee hours to discuss the issues most important to the 45th District. This is an opportunity to ask your questions, as well as discuss your comments and suggestions regarding state and local issues. These coffee hours will be more informal than our typical town hall style meetings, so please come for whatever portion of the hour works for your schedule. You are not expected to attend the entire time. I look forward to sitting down with you personally to listen to your concerns and answer your questions.

Upcoming Coffee Hours (Tentative):

Saturday, May 15th from 10-11:30 a.m.

Saturday, June 12th from 10-11:30 a.m.

The dates and times listed above are tentative. Please visit my website at www.housedemocrats.wa.gov/members/springer for updated coffee hour details.

Rep. Roger Goodman



Rep. Roger Goodman with a class of Early Start students at Norman Rockwell elementary.

Early childhood education

Giving every child a great start

Public schools are meant to give every child — no matter their background — a excellent education.

Educated voters are the foundation of our democracy, and educated workers are the bedrock for today’s economy. This year, Washington state took a huge step toward giving every child the education they need to compete for the world’s best jobs.

As the father of two young children, I know how hard it is for working moms and dads

to find a good pre-school that’s affordable and has open slots. Parents need better options for early learning, because half of the children in a kindergarten class are already behind on their first day of school. Many never catch up.

But there’s hope. I’m happy to tell you that the governor signed House Bill 2731, legislation I introduced to improve and expand early learning for children in every corner of Washington state.

Public safety

If you look at the numbers, domestic violence and drunk driving are the top two problems that police handle. I am working with police, prosecutors and victim advocates to find solutions.

Reducing domestic violence

How can we prevent domestic violence — and hold repeat offenders accountable? I wrote House Bill 2777 to help find solutions, and I’m happy that this important new update to our state’s domestic violence statutes was signed into law.

This new law targets repeat offenders, which is where the real problem is. Most people are horrified to have the police show up, and that scares them straight. Repeat offenders don’t learn.

This bill allows prior violations for assault, harassment, stalking or violations of a no-contact order to be counted properly and weighed like a felony offense. That will hold repeat offenders accountable and help protect people from being further abused or victimized.

Holding drunk drivers accountable

Ignition interlock devices have been proven effective in preventing drunk driving. This technology has helped to reduce drunk driving in Washington state while allowing people to stay sober, keep their job — and drive to work without hurting anybody.

House Bill 2742 and House Bill 2466 expand the use of ignition interlocks and reform the program to make it available to more people in Washington state. The ignition interlock technology used in our state will also be guaranteed to be more reliable.

Proposed constitutional amendment on bail

Since you’ll be voting on this in November, I can’t encourage you to support or oppose this constitutional amendment. I do want to explain why I voted yes on this issue when it came before the House of Representatives.

A flaw in our state constitution makes it possible for every person accused of a crime to post bail, unless you were charged with aggravated first-degree murder. Every police officer and prosecutor can tell you stories about dangerous people getting out on bail and doing more damage to victims or trial witnesses.

Last November, we saw the worst example of this in state history when Maurice Clemmons was arrested time after time, only to be allowed post bail. He was facing life in prison and told friends and family that he intended to kill as many police officers as he could, then shoot children at a school. Almost unspeakably, he managed to execute four Lakewood police officers and then elude police for days.

I helped craft a compromise on this constitutional amendment to balance the rights of the accused with the need to protect crime victims and the public. I voted yes because I believe the current system creates an incentive for the most violent and dangerous offenders facing life in prison to post bail and have one last violent spree.

Finding efficiencies in the justice system

Deferred prosecution

Courts often use deferred prosecution to force addicts to get clean and drunks to enter treatment and get sober.

I wrote House Bill 2487 to address this problem, and now that it’s state law, it will help this effort by getting offenders to help fund more of the costs of deferred prosecutions.

Court interpreters

Every court needs interpreters. Washington state is a melting pot, and last year, our courts hired interpreters for more than 75 languages. Our state is a national leader in certifying interpreters, and I wrote House Bill 2518 to further improve that system and cut costs by eliminating the legal requirement that interpreters be repeatedly sworn in. Instead, they can be sworn in once. This will save time and money.

Part-time judges

A flaw in the law means that part-time judges don’t get paid when they sit as a visiting judge. Would you work without pay? The use of part-time judges should be encouraged, because they have more experience than attorneys serving as pro tem judges. I introduced House Bill 2681, which passed. This new law levels the playing field by eliminating this problem in our laws regarding judges.

Helping foster kids

When a child is removed from a home because of neglect or abuse, there are attorneys in the court room for the state and attorneys for the parents — but most of the time, nobody is there to represent the interests of the children.

Washington is one of 16 states that doesn’t require that children in dependency cases have an attorney representing their interests.

To help foster kids, I wrote House Bill 2735, which is now law and makes sure children know that they have the right to request counsel. I believe children deserve a voice, and this law will help give them one.

